

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This introductory chapter portrays an overview of present study. This chapter embraces several segments, which are: research background, research questions, purpose of the study, scope of the study, significance of the study, and clarification of terms.

1.1 Research Background

The administration of computer-based national examination (CBNE) for particular secondary schools (Junior, Senior, and Vocational high school) in Kupang, Indonesia has psychologically influenced the teachers in which they tend to prepare their students to do it well and get the higher score as well. Based on the current report (The Center of Educational Assessment of Indonesia [CEAI], 2018), in the last three years (2015 – 2017), one school as group A has administered CBNE since 2015. Four schools as group B have administered CBNE since 2016. Two schools as group C have just administered CBNE in 2017. With regard to the average scores, group A consistently experiences a decline at about 2 – 5%. Two schools from group B experience a decline in 2016 but an increase in 2017. The other one school consistently experiences a decline at about 2 – 9%. The other one school experiences an increase as much 7% in 2016 but a decline as much 10% in 2017. All schools from group C experience a decline in 2016 when they still administer Paper-based National Examination (school one 10%, school two 50%). However, in 2017 as the first the administration of CBNE, both schools experience an increase as much 10%.

From the report, it is assumed that there might be a shift of teaching process at the last grade of secondary schools in which they tend to teach the test than to teach the materials as stated on the syllabus. Indeed, it leads teacher-centered in which contradictory with the objective of current curriculum to promote learner autonomy in the teaching and learning process.

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The aims of this study are to investigate the English teachers' perceptions on computer-based English national examination (CBENE) and the influence of CBENE on English teachers' teaching process. Since 2015, computer-based test has been introduced in Indonesian National Examination for secondary level (Junior, Senior, and Vocational High Schools). The government uses this kind of testing in order to meet the globalization demand and the importance of information communication technology in education as it is stated on The Government Regulation Number 133/M.PAN/5/2001 (Ministry of Empowerment of State Apparatus and Bureaucracy Reform, 2001) related to the needs of National Educational Networking to all the schools in Indonesia and School TV. Thus, it is also as used to improve the quality of national examination as well as to replace the paper-based gradually (Saukah, 2015).

Furthermore, the introduction of CBNE raises pros and cons. The pros come from the government who believe that CBNE would promote: information communication technology (henceforth ICT) in teaching and learning environment, independent learner, and higher order thinking of the students. On the other hand, the cons believe that the lack of ICT literacy of the students which will affect their achievement in CBNE. This is caused by the status of national examination as high-stakes test in which will affect not only to the students' future career but also the quality of the school.

Actually, the result of national examination is designed by the government as a means of measuring and evaluating the students' achievement in national level, and it will be as one of the requirements to enter further study (Indonesian President Regulation Number 13 Year 2015 in Ministry of the State Secretariat, 2015). It is in line with Saukah (2015) acknowledging that national exams are administered at the end of the academic year of each educational institution level (junior and senior high schools) in Indonesian schooling system functioning to evaluate students' learning achievement nationally. Thus, the result itself will be used as mapping of the quality program of the school and as a feedback or references to the school in relation of developing as well as the improvement of its education.

The government as stated in The Government Regulation issued by Ministry of Education and Culture (2017) through the Government Regulation Number 3 Year 2017 acknowledged that the result of national examination is not considered as the main criteria to pass or graduate from the school. However, since it functions as either to draw the quality of the institution or as one of the conditions for admission to higher education, it seems to be importance for the teachers and students in the preparation for

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national examination since it would describe the school's level of achievement through the national examination. Thus, it is categorized as a high-stakes test. McNamara (2000) defines a high-stakes test as a test which aims to deliver data regarding fundamental on the decision making of the test takers. It is similar with the function of national examination in which it becomes one of the requirements for the students to pursue their study.

As the consideration of the importance of national examination result both in the schools' quality and students' further study, the implementation of computer-based test on national examination will effect to the teaching and learning process known as washback effect of testing. Washback, in general is described as the impact, influence or effect resulted from a testing or an examination on teaching and learning (Hughes, 1989 & McNamara, 2000). Moreover, Alderson and Wall (1993) acknowledged that the teaching and learning process is determined by the tests since it brings significant judgment. It means that the tests can have both types of effects to the teaching and learning process. Thus, aiming to have a good result in testing, some teachers neglect to teach the materials which are not included in testing and they also have negative perception on the standardized testing and the curriculum which is testing-based (Smith in Cheng & Watanabe, 2004). Therefore, in high-stakes test, there are some tendencies that some teachers teach the test and teaching to test (Sukyadi & Mardiani, 2011).

A number of researchers have concerned on the washback on high-stakes testing abroad such as in Spain, Pizarro (2010) in his research revealed that a high-stakes testing of English test has influenced the teaching process in Spanish upper secondary schools in terms of curriculum, materials, teaching methods, and teaching feelings and attitudes. In Pakistan, Ahmad and Rao (2012) and in Jordan, Al-Jamal and Ghadi (2008) in their research found that the administration of high-stakes test influenced English teachers' teaching methodology and syllabus as well. In Yemen, Tayeb, Abd Aziz, Ismail, and Khan (2014) related to the effect of the general secondary English examination (GSEE) on teaching and learning in Yemen. In Indonesian, several researchers of washback have been conducted. Such as, Sukyadi and Mardiani (2011) in their research found that lower and middle achiever schools tend to have negative washback than the higher-achiever schools. Thus, Furaidah, Saukah and Widiati (2015) in their research revealed that washback effect found either on the lower or higher-achiever schools. Saukah and Cahyono (2015) focused on discrepancy of washback on national examination to the English teaching and learning process with the different functions of national examination result. Meekaeo (2017) related to the

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washback effect on national examination in Indonesia and Thailand. Moreover, related to CBNE, there are several researchers of CBNE in Indonesia: Harmiyuni and Sailan (2016) and Pakpahan (2016). Those studies revealed that the administration of CBNE has its advantages and disadvantages.

Considering all aforementioned circumstances, the researcher would like to explore the washback of computer-based English national examination on the English teachers' perceptions on English teaching process and the actual teaching process. By employing three instruments to triangulate the results, the study is aimed to obtain the information deeply and comprehensively in which it would have significant contribution to the Indonesian education theoretically, practically, and as well as authoritatively.

1.2 Research Questions

This research delivers the following research questions.

1. What are the English teachers' perceptions on the computer-based English national examination?
2. How does the computer-based English national examination influence the English teachers' teaching process?

1.3 Research Objectives

The objectives of this study are formulated based on the problems to be investigated. Thus, the aims of this study are as follows:

1. To find out the washback effect of computer-based English national examination on the English teachers' perceptions on English teaching process.
2. To find out the washback effect of computer-based English national examination on the English teachers' actual teaching process in the classroom.

1.4 Significances of the Study

Since the implementation of the computer-based English national examination has just been initiated recently, the report of the present study may contribute significant information for English teachers to evaluate their strategies in overwhelming the English national examination which has been on the basis of computer-based test. Thus, it will offer a new vision to have an effective English

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teaching process. Moreover, this study may contribute to the literature of language testing and evaluation in Indonesia. Thus, the result of the study may provide a real description of the effect of computer-based English National Examination for Vocational High School level as an input for government decisions. Finally, the present study may open a new window to researchers who share similar interest and those who concern the benefit and challenge of washback in the context of EFL classroom practice in Indonesia.

1.5 Scope of the Study

The focus of this study is the washback of computer-based English national examination on the English teachers' teaching process. Therefore, it will not cover other English tests in vocational schools. Besides, this investigation will not cover the washback on the learning process.

1.6 Operational Definition

1. Washback in this study refers to the definition of Hughes (2003). He describes washback as the effect of testing on teaching and learning process.
2. Positive washback refers to the assessment used which is based on the teaching materials, knowledge, and skills taught in the teaching and learning process. Thus, both teachers and learners are encouraged to achieve their teaching and learning objectives (Alderson & Wall, 1993).
3. Negative washback refers to the teaching and learning process which are focusing on teaching the language test rather than teaching based on the syllabus. (Shohamy, 1992).
4. A high-stakes test is the test believed that testing may influence either the teachers' or the students' lives particularly related to psychological affairs such as learning anxiety (Ferman, 2004).
5. National Examination is an exam conducted at the end of each academic year and it is functioned as mapping of the school quality and as one of the requirement to continue to further study (The Government Regulation issued by Ministry of Education and Culture Number 3 Year 2017, 2017).
6. Computer-based test is a mode in delivering a test through computer which is aimed to replace the use of paper-based test in terms of efficiency and accessibility. (Standard Operational Procedures of National Examination

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in academic year 2016/2017 in National Education Standard Board [NESB], 2017.)

7. Teaching is an activity to escort and equip learners in learning so that they will have access to learn in conducive situation (Brown, 2001).
8. Perception is the ability to understand the differences which include senses, feeling, ideas, thoughts, and theories (Choy & Cheah, 2009).

1.7 Organization of the Thesis

This thesis comprises of five chapters. The first chapter presents the rationales behind the topic selection involving the objectives of the study as well as the significances which would be expected to emerge after doing the research. Meanwhile, chapter two unveils theories supporting the study. It comprises the theories of perception, evaluation, assessment, and test, the definition of washback, high-stakes standardized test, the overview of computer-based test, the relationship of computer-based English national examination and EFL teaching, national examination, and English national examination. The third chapter of this study discusses the research methodology consisting research design, research settings, data collecting technique, research procedure, data analysis technique, and research timeline which are elaborated in chapter three. Chapter four presents the findings of the present study and as well as the discussion. The last chapter of this study presents the conclusion, limitation of the study, and the recommendation for further studies.